

If the biggest check you can write is \$5,000, there is no great premium in hiding who you are. When you can write a \$5 million check to back a candidate, suddenly hiding who you are becomes extremely valuable and salient.

So, suddenly, this became very real. But those Justices who had opened the door to unlimited money, when they made that decision, in order to justify that decision, they had to say that the spending had to be transparent. Otherwise, the Citizens United decision would not have worked in the constitutional scheme. They had to say that.

But for the next decade, what did they do about it? Case after case came before them where the dark money problem was raised. We rode through a billion dollars in dark money being spent in our elections. This was on the front page of the newspaper. This was being done in plain view. And what did the Republican Justices on the Supreme Court do to enforce their own stated requirement of transparency? Not one thing.

And so we have had a decade of corruption of government by billionaire interests who can hide who they are and operate through an enormous phalanx of phony front groups whom they have stood up. And if you want to know how real this is, look at what we have had to do in the reconciliation measure to address climate change—because when I got here, there were Republicans willing to address climate change.

We had bill after bill in the Senate that were bipartisan and serious and sincere. That stopped dead in January of 2010. When Citizens United was decided, the dark money spigots opened, and the fossil fuel industry behind them enforced compliance across the entire Republican Party. If you crossed the fossil fuel industry on climate change, if you are Bob Inglis, you were out, you were done. If you lined up with them and did what they said, in came tens of millions of dollars in dark money to support you.

It was a devil's bargain, and it cost us a lost decade on climate change. And now we have to go forward, sadly, in a partisan way to solve this problem. That is the pressure of dark money in our politics. It is behind the capture of the Supreme Court. It is behind voter suppression. This is demonstrable stuff, and we have got to put an end to it. And it is a tragedy and a disgrace that we can't go to cleaning up the dark money mess.

My Republican colleagues and their dark money groups are actually at the point now where they are accusing us of taking dark money. They are accusing Democrats of being the dark money party. Well, we just settled that question tonight. Democrats want to clean it up. They want to protect it. It is as simple as that. That is all you need to know.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I must do a couple of procedural things.

But do my colleagues from Georgia and California want to speak on voting rights?

No. Thank you. I am sure the Senators from New Jersey and Connecticut are very grateful as well.

I will be brief.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 64.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James Richard Kvaal, of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary of Education.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 64, James Richard Kvaal, of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary of Education.

Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Catherine Cortez Masto, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Duckworth, Christopher A. Coons, Tammy Baldwin, Chris Van Hollen, Tim Kaine, Thomas R. Carper, Amy Klobuchar, Margaret Wood Hassan, Alex Padilla.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 252.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David G. Estudillo, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 252, David G. Estudillo, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

Charles E. Schumer, Tim Kaine, Sherrod Brown, Tammy Duckworth, Robert Menendez, Christopher A. Coons, Benjamin L. Cardin, Chris Van Hollen, Ben Ray Lujan, Margaret Wood Hassan, Alex Padilla, Edward J. Markey, Maria Cantwell, Patty Murray, Jacky Rosen, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 260.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Angel Kelley, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 260, Angel Kelley, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Elizabeth Warren, Edward J. Markey, Christopher A. Coons, Cory A. Booker, Alex Padilla, Richard Blumenthal, Mazie Hirono, Chris Van Hollen, Michael F. Bennet, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Martin Heinrich, Kirsten E. Gillibrand.